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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 11 September 1990, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. GARBA (Nigeria)

- Tribute to the memory of Nasim Ahmed, former Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations

- Question of Namibia [36]

  (a) Report of the United Nations Council for Namibia

  (b) Report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

  (c) Draft resolutions

  (d) Report of the Fifth Committee

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- Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments [17] (continued)

  (j) Appointment of the United Nations Commissioner for Namibia

- Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples [18] (continued)

- Tentative programme of work

The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF NASIM AHMED, FORMER PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PAKISTAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

The PRESIDENT: I should like to invite members to join in a tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Nasim Ahmed, who was Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations at the time of his death on 22 July 1990. Ambassador Ahmed had a useful and constructive career, both as an internationally renowned journalist and as a respected civil servant and esteemed diplomat. He will be remembered for the devotion with which he served his country and the cause of the United Nations.

On behalf of the General Assembly and on my own behalf I request the representative of Pakistan to convey our heartfelt condolences to the Government of Pakistan and to the bereaved family.

I now invite members of the Assembly to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Nasim Ahmed.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Nigeria, who will speak on behalf of the African States.

Mr. GAMBARI (Nigeria): On behalf of the Group of African States at the United Nations, let me congratulate you once again, Sir, on the way in which you are steering the deliberations of the General Assembly. We in Africa are grateful to the international community for the opportunity given to you, one of our most able sons, to continue to serve the world in your present capacity.

It was with deep sorrow and a heavy heart that the African Group received the news of the sudden transition of a great son of Pakistan and a sincere friend of Africa, the late Ambassador Nasim Ahmed. Until his passing, Ambassador Ahmed was his great country's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, an assignment he took with utmost seriousness and single-minded dedication.

(Mr. Gambari, Nigeria)

He was an indomitable fighter not only for his country's cause but also, and with equal dedication, for any just and righteous cause of oppressed peoples all over the world. We recall vividly the emotional speech made by our late colleague the Ambassador of Pakistan on 22 June 1990 in this very Hall at the special meeting of the Special Committee against Apartheid in honour of Mr. Nelson Mandela. He promised to walk the last mile with Nelson Mandela and all others struggling for their freedom.

Although he is personally unable to walk that last mile, we shall remember those words, which will be a source of encouragement to those fighting for their self-determination in South Africa. Africa will miss this great friend and astute internationalist. It is with sincerity and a deep sense of loss that we convey our condolences to the people and the Government of Pakistan as well as to the family of the late Ambassador Ahmed on this irreparable loss. May his soul rest in peace.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Sri Lanka, who will speak on behalf of the Asian States.

Mr. JAYASINGHE (Sri Lanka): On behalf of the States members of the Asian Group, it is my sad duty to express our sincere and heartfelt condolences on the sorrowful and untimely demise of His Excellency Mr. Nasim Ahmed, the late Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations. Ambassador Nasim Ahmed had a distinguished career in the public service of Pakistan and was a renowned journalist.

Born in New Delhi in October 1927, Mr. Ahmed, after his graduation at home, continued his studies at the London School of Economics. He was a member of the Royal Institute of International Affairs and the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London. In 1950 he founded the Pakistan Society in Britain. He was the first Asian to be elected as President of the Commonwealth Association

(Mr. Jayasinghe, Sri Lanka)

and the Foreign Press Association in London. He also served as chief overseas correspondent for the Pakistan newspaper Dawn, and was managing director of a publishing company in London from 1978 to 1981. From 1972 to 1976 he held the post of Secretary of Pakistan's Federal Ministry of Information and Broadcasting as well as that of Chairman of the Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation and the Pakistan Television Corporation. From 1976 to 1978 he served as Pakistan's Ambassador to Denmark. In 1982 he served as adviser to the Director-General of the Intergovernmental Bureau for Informatics in Rome. In June 1989 Ambassador Ahmed was appointed as the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations.

During his stay in New York as Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations we had the honour and privilege of working closely with Ambassador Ahmed in all forums of the United Nations. On such occasions many of us had the good fortune of benfiting from the wisdom, diplomatic skill and experience of Ambassador Ahmed. In working together we very often looked to his advice and guidance in our common endeavour to promote international peace and co-operation.

To my recollection, the last occasion on which we listened to Ambassador Ahmed was when he spoke on behalf of the members of the Asian Group during the visit of Nelson Mandela. The oratory he displayed and the sincere manner and tone of his speech on that occasion were a sincere testimony to his commitment to the promotion of international justice and peace.

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(Mr. Jayasinghe, Sri Lanka)

In the Asian Group, Ambassador Ahmed always provided the necessary leadership and made available his friendly and valuable advice to members. The pleasing and unassuming manner in which Ambassador Ahmed conducted his affairs won the hearts of all who knew him. Although Ambassador Ahmed is with us no more, the memorable association from which we benefited immensely will always be treasured by us.

On behalf of the States members of the Asian Group, I kindly request you, Sir, to convey to the family of His Excellency the late Mr. Nasim Ahmed and the delegation of Pakistan our heartfelt and deep condolences on this irreparable loss.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Hungary, who will speak on behalf of the Eastern European States.

Mr. ERDOS (Hungary): In my capacity as Chairman of the Group of Eastern European States for the month of September and on behalf of all the members of our Group I wish to express to the Government of Pakistan and its Permanent Mission to the United Nations and to the bereaved family of our departed colleague our deep condolences on Ambassador Nasim Ahmed's passing.

Ambassador Ahmed, Permanent Representative of Pakistan, was a skilful diplomat who represented his country at the United Nations in times of difficulties and hopes in the region to which Pakistan belongs. We all recall the significant contribution he made to the noble work of our Organization. It was only about a year ago that our Pakistani colleague presented his credentials to the Secretary-General. All too soon fate put an end to his work. The late Ambassador Nasim Ahmed was a distinguished member of our diplomatic community and we will all remember and miss him.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Belize, who will speak on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean States.

Mr. ROGERS (Belize): Today we pay a tribute to the late Ambassador of the Republic of Pakistan to the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Nasim Ahmed. Mr. Ahmed regrettably passed away on 21 July 1990, in Tokyo. The untimely passing of Mr. Ahmed, whom I had the opportunity to meet and confer with on several occasions, leaves with us a vacuum. The late Ambassador not only distinguished himself in the diplomatic world, representing his Government and people, but he was rightfully considered one of the most accomplished and outstanding journalists in his country, in Asia and, indeed, throughout the world. He is known for his contribution to the free press in Asia and his untiring efforts towards its devlopment. Testimony to that was his election to high offices in numerous press associations in the Commonwealth of Nations.

Our distinguished colleague will be remembered too for his skilful ability to deal with issues affecting his country, his region and the world at the United Nations. He was committed to peace and development and he advocated them. His country can be proud of him. The death of Ambassador Ahmed is a loss to the international community.

On behalf of the Latin America and Caribbean Group, I extend to his family and friends, his people and Government our deepest and profound sympathy.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Belgium, who will speak on behalf of the Western European and Other States.

Mr. NOTERDAEME (Belgium) (interpretation from French): On behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States it is my honour to join with you, Sir, and the representatives of other groups in conveying our most sincere condolences to the Permanent Mission of Pakistan and the Government of Pakistan on the occasion of the death of His Excellency Mr. Nasim Ahmed, Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the United Nations.

(Mr. Noterdaeme, Belgium)

Mr. Ahmed spent only one year at the United Nations, but we retain a warm memory of esteem for him because of the quality of his contributions and his general accomplishments. Mr. Ahmed showed himself particularly sensitive to international problems and was able to analyse them in a very thorough manner that always earned him an attentive audience. His sudden loss greatly saddens us, both personally and professionally.

I should like to take this opportunity to convey to the bereaved family our most sincere condolences at this painful time.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the Observer of Palestine.

Mr. TERZI (Palestine) (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of my colleagues, members of the Group of Arab States, and especially on behalf of the delegation of Palestine, I should like to express our deep sorrow at the loss of our brother and friend Ambassador Nasim Ahmed, former Permanent Representative of Pakistan. I should like also to convey our condolences to the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and to its people and Government.

The late Ambassador was a great defender of just causes, democracy, international co-operation and the welfare of oppressed peoples throughout the world. He was a close friend to the Arab cause, at the core of which is the question of Palestine, with respect to which he was an active representative of his country in the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, where I had the honour to work closely with him.

We, like the Government and the people of Pakistan, have lost a great man. We pray to God Almighty that the soul of the late Ambassador may rest in peace.

Once again, we extend to the bereaved family and to the delegation, the Government and the people of Pakistan our heartfelt condolences.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of the United States of America, who will speak on behalf of the host country.

Mr. MOORE (United States of America): As the representative of the host country, and on behalf of the President and the people of the United States, I would like to add my voice to those of my colleagues who have spoken in tribute to our departed colleague, Ambassador Nasim Ahmed of Pakistan.

Ambassador Ahmed's tenure at the United Nations was regrettably brief, but in that short time he won the warm friendship and the genuine respect of those of us in New York who had the good fortune to work with him. He brought to his assignment as Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations a broad spectrum of experience, including distinguished journalism, a vigorous and engaging personality, and an outstanding analytic mind.

Nasim Ahmed died as he lived - on the move, and in the service of his country, a diplomat pursuing the cause of world peace, order and democracy. He will be missed by us all. On behalf of the United States of America, I extend my heartfelt condolences to the people of Pakistan and most especially to his family.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the Permanent Representative of Pakistan.

Mr. MARKER (Pakistan): On behalf of the Government of Pakistan and the Pakistan delegation, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, the Chairmen of the regional groups, and the representative of the host country for the kind expressions of sympathy and condolence on the sad and tragic demise of Ambassador Nasim Ahmed. I would also like to thank all the other representatives who have condoled with me on this tragic loss.

Ambassador Nasim Ahmed was both a patriot and a committed and dedicated citizen of the world. He firmly believed in democracy, in promoting the cause of international co-operation for strengthening peace and security, and in alleviating the plight of the poorer members of the international community. His commitment to

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

the call of duty was matched by his deep humility and compassion. With his sad and untimely demise, Pakistan has lost not only an able diplomat but a man of great courage and integrity, and, may I add, I have lost a personal friend.

Let me thank you all once again for your kind words, which will be of immense consolation both to the bereaved family and to Ambassador Nasim Ahmed's friends and admirers in Pakistan.

AGENDA ITEM 36

QUESTION OF NAMIBIA

(a) REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS COUNCIL FOR NAMIBIA (A/44/24 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1/Rev.1)

(b) REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (A/44/23 (Part V) and (Part V)/Add.1)

(c) DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (A/44/24/Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1/Rev.1)

(d) REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/44/975)

The PRESIDENT: I now call on to the President of the United Nations Council for Namibia to introduce the report of the Council and the draft resolutions contained therein.

Mr. ZUZE (Zambia), President of the United Nations Council for Namibia: Mr. President, it is a profound source of satisfaction for the United Nations Council for Namibia to see you presiding over this meeting. So often have we in these chambers spoken of "historic occasions" that the word "history" has itself been trivialized. And yet there are episodes, moments in time, invested with a quality and dimension that distinguish them so palpably from the commonplace and ordinary. Today's meeting is such a moment. We are proud that it occurs under your guidance.

(Mr. Zuze, President, United Nations Council for Namibia)

Twenty-three summers ago we were born. And yet, to paraphrase the man for all seasons, Thomas More, we had hoped that even at our birth death does but stand aside a little. At the last meeting of the United Nations Council for Namibia, my friend and colleague Ambassador Gharekhan of India, who had been present at its very first meeting in 1967, remarked that it was rare that a moment of demise should have been so eagerly anticipated and welcomed. Certainly, we would have willed it far sooner.

I have thought long and hard about what to say on this occasion. It is not often that the deceased is given an opportunity to deliver his own eulogy. I could, I suppose, speak as a chronicler, even pretend to be a historian. I could tell you of what we did and what we could not do. I could recite the names of persons, of places and of things with which the history of the Council has been inextricably linked. I could catalogue the dates and times that so vividly punctuate our memory. I could speak of figures and numbers that say much but by no means all.

But I need not. For those who are interested, our current report and the many before that will tell it all. It is not only that I fear I shall only repeat that which is so easily accessible. It is that I fear I shall unwittingly compel members to conclude that the contours of our achievements, formidable as they are, define the boundaries of our worth and our relevance. That, of course, is not true.

When I was very young, we children were fond of reciting a rhyme that suddenly comes to mind now:

"Piggy on the rail track, picking up stones.
Along came an engine and broke Piggy's bones.
'Hey,' said Piggy, 'that's not fair',
'Hey,' said the driver, 'I don't care.'"

(Mr. Zuze, President, United Nations Council for Namibia)

And so we have the rhymes "stones" and "bones", "fair" and "care". We were young then, too young perhaps to savour fully the metaphors of this childlike rhyme, but as we grew up we found it a strangely apposite parable for the many facets of our being: for our growth as persons, for the trials and yearnings of our own space of life as indeed for our larger, more composite "persons" as societies and nations.

(Mr. Zuze, President, United Nations Council for Namibia)

There would always be those concerned simply and unobstrusively with their mission and their work at hand. There would always be those who, with intent or inadvertently, came in the way of those mightier and more powerful. There would always be the denied and the trodden upon whose only recourse would be an appeal to fairness and reason. And there would always be those who simply chose not to care.

It was in the mid-1960s that the idea of a coherent definition of international responsibility for Namibia assumed practical shape. It was an evocative moment in international relations. A brutal war raged in Viet Nam which the United Nations was powerless to limit or control. The great-Power quintet which had defined the score for this Organization 20 years earlier was broken and divided within itself. The Non-Aligned Movement, the first collective assertion of international conscience in the post-war world, had only just begun to be heard, even to be listened to. The world's most populous nation was denied presence in these chambers, and so too were many smaller nations whose individual identities remained obscured in the overwhelming maternal cling of their colonial occupants.

And yet, strangely, at that time of international fracture and disorganization, the individual suddenly began to matter. It was the time when Joan Baez sang of "passionate strangers who rescued each other from a lifetime of cares". It was a wholly personal metaphor, and yet it seemed to define the increasing articulation and vehemence of a thinking world. Domestic disenchantments fused with perceptions of international inequities. The vigour of protest was introduced into the fabric of post-war society, and what spurred and lent fire to that protest was not simply the grievance of an individual about his own denial of rights. It was a concern far wider, where those powerless to find justice for themselves found strangers passionate in their cause.

(Mr. Zuze, President, United Nations Council for Namibia)

I underline this because I have often wondered whether the United Nations as it stands today would possess the initiative, the imagination, indeed the audacity, to visualize and to create an institution comparable to the Council for Namibia, which it so determinedly launched in what seems another age. Perhaps it is the new civility and decorum in international affairs. There is the memorable line attributed by Robert Bolt to Ambassador Chapuys, the Spanish Envoy to Cromwell, where he remarks delightedly, "Even in times like this, even now, it is a pleasure to converse with you". To a non-professional - some of my friends might say unprofessional - diplomat like me, that seems to say it all: no matter what the injustices, the outrages, the violations on another shore, here in these chambers we remain far too busy being nice to each other. And the answer perhaps, aptly enough, lies in what Cromwell said on another occasion: "There are some things that are beyond good manners".

All this is known, if not fully appreciated. I have referred to the global context in which the Council was conceived. It was a time when disaffection and protest were given voice in new, fresh and unexpected forms. Sitting in this Hall today there are, I am sure, many mellowed delegates who were, at least spiritually, part of that surge of conscience that sparkled a quarter of a century ago. But soon, as a contemporary composer put it, "the pictures in the Times could no longer be put in rhymes". It was not the articulation that was important; it was the definition of remedy.

It was a difficult moment for the United Nations. It had tried its conventional and accessible forms of redress: resolutions of the General Assembly, the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice, missions of consultation and negotiation. And yet nothing seemed to click. Like Don Giovanni

(Mr. Zuze, President, United Nations Council for Namibia)

trapped in the stage setting of Madame Butterfly, we suddenly realized nothing - the rules, the environment, the definitions - nothing was of our choosing or of our acceptance. And so we had to draw up the rules.

That is what the United Nations realized in 1966. The decisions it took in regard to Namibia - the termination of the South African mandate in 1966 and the direct assumption of responsibility in 1967 - were swift, decisive and articulate. There was no hem, there was no hesitation. It took the word "unique", until then a tired, flaccid and much over-used adjective, and gave it the vitality and vigour of a verb. It did not assign or apportion responsibility, it assumed it. It created what was virtually a new member State, politically and legally competent to represent the interests of its people. It made dynamic the many currents of international indignation and anger over the brutalization of Namibia. It offered itself as a vehicle and a forum for their harmony.

This is not to suggest that our determination and vision made easier the enormity of our responsibility. They were, quite honestly, moments when we wondered what exactly we were doing, and why. How was it that despite every civilized method and appeal, and indeed instruction, nothing had happened? It was not that the more things changed, the more they stayed the same. It was that nothing changed and things just got worse. Perhaps all our endeavours and appeals were pointless and we should simply call it a day and head home.

There is the story of a distinguished delegate who dreamt he was addressing the United Nations and woke up to find that he was. Certainly we have had our moments of complete unreality when the link between the prose of statements we have heard and the known passions of their articulators has seemed completely absent. There have been times when I myself have felt, in the middle of a statement I was

(Mr. Zuze, President, United Nations Council for Namibia)

making, like the telephone caller who is suddenly asked after 10 uninterruped minutes of conversation, "Who is this?"

Yes, indeed, who were we? A child born on the day that the United Nations revoked South Africa's mandate over Namibia will be nearly 24 today, as it meets to conclude its own mandate. He could be maimed. He could be a parent who has lost his child. He could be a worker denied a professional commensurate with his ability and his choice. That is true. That is a truth from which we cannot escape. That is a truth all our efforts and intentions could not abridge or deny.

But there is our own side of the truth. We have sought to be a custodian not only of Namibia's present, but its past and its future. We have sought to protect the land and resources inhered within it by history. We have sought to help train and equip a new citizenry with skills and talents essential to the fashioning of nationhood. It is not for me as a scarcely disinterested individual to say whether or not we have succeeded. We have been called frivolous and wasteful - ironically, by those very persons who persisted in believing in the prudence and seriousness of purpose possessed by the occupier.

(Mr. Zuze, President, United Nations Council for Namibia)

But we have no regrets. There are many to be grateful to: the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, which insisted upon Namibia's rightful place and position on our agenda of concern; the front-line States, many younger than the Council itself, who gave its programmes not only impetus but the security of physical territory; the member States of the Council, which worked within the constituencies of their larger regional groups to come to terms with the gut issues of Namibia; and, indeed, the Assembly, whose confidence in us has been reaffirmed each year, on occasions far more than we would have wished but made necessary by the denial of our goal.

Above all, our gratitude goes to the Namibian people. The leadership provided to them by the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) has been vindicated amply in their first free but not necessarily fair elections. The grit and heroism Namibians have displayed have made almost petty the trials and difficulties with which the Council was often faced. The grace, the forgiving and the hope with which they have begun their free journey have given the United Nations itself a measure of strength.

Relations between nations possess all too often the qualities and the complexities of those between individuals. There are the moments of zeal and passion, of yearning and regret, of despair and the loneliness of solitude, of the triumph of togetherness. Only a few days ago I chanced upon a poem of Pablo Neruda in its English translation which I should like to share for a moment with you:

"These hands have measured the Earth,
Separated minerals and cereals, made peace and war
Demolished the distances of seas and rivers.
And yet, when they move over you, they cannot encompass you.
And in that territory, from your feet to your brow,
Walking, Walking, Walking, I shall spend my life."

(Mr. Zuze, President, United Nations Council for Namibia)

Such were the hands that joined to form the United Nations Council for Namibia. It has fulfilled its mission. The end has finally arrived. And yet, as one Little Prince once remarked, that which is essential is invisible to the eye. Some day, we are sure, it shall emerge. For now we are grateful for the opportunity we have been given, for the hope, for the love and for the laughter that infused our efforts, for the reality of this great nation and people we have finally been ennobled to see.

I did refer to the affection and camaraderie between members of the Council throughout its history, which infused and indeed lent enthusiasm to their work. In this effort there was one constant source of support upon which members of the Council, and indeed successive Presidents of the body and Commissioners for Namibia, came to depend upon. That was the Secretariat. It would be easy to speak of their contribution to our work, but that would be superfluous because it could be argued that it was what they were supposed to do in any case. But to do so I feel misses an important point, that the challenge and the mandate before them, no less than that before the Council itself, required imagination and dynamism of an exceptional order, which does not easily conform to the traditionally defined norms and requirements of bureaucracy. These are qualities which the Council is sure can continue to enrich the United Nations system.

Members of the Council have on their own initiative made reference to this in the draft resolutions now before the Assembly and also requested the Secretary-General to consider as a matter of priority the redeployment within the United Nations system of the staff of the Office of the Commissioner for Namibia. This paragraph, like all paragraphs in resolutions, is cold and precise, but I would wish the Assembly to know that it is one that truly emanates from the heart

(Mr. Zuze, President, United Nations Council for Namibia)

of the Council. We have seen good times and bad, but there has never been an occasion when the political body and the staff supporting its activities have been separate or distinct in our own eyes. Just as our mission was one, we too were one, and while we are grateful that the realization of our mandate has made it possible for us to go our different ways, we do so with memories made vivid by their sharing.

It is now my privilege to introduce for consideration by the Assembly the recommendations of the United Nations Council for Namibia contained in document A/44/24/Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1/Rev.1. These reflect the collective and unanimous views of members of the Council relating to the fulfilment of its responsibility as the legal Administering Authority for Namibia. They reflect also its conviction that there are aspects of its mandate which remain to be completed even though the Council's own structure shall no longer be there to do so. It has made specific recommendations accordingly for the future conduct of such programmes. It has no intention of abandoning them half way and counts on the Assembly for support.

The Council for Namibia came into being as the voice of a voiceless people. The people of Namibia have regained their voice but we shall not go silent on them.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the Assembly, I should like to pay a tribute to the President of the Council for Namibia and indeed thank him for the very important valedictory statement that he has just made.

I call on the Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, Mr. Tesfaye Tadesse of Ethiopia.

Mr. TADESSE (Ethiopia), Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (Special Committee of 24): Mr. President, it is a continued pleasure for us to see you once again presiding over the deliberations of the Assembly.

On this historic occasion, which marks the culmination of one of the United Nations longest and most arduous undertakings, it is an honour, and may I say a distinct personal pleasure, to pay a tribute to the extraordinary accomplishments of the United Nations Council for Namibia in fulfilling the mandate entrusted to it by the Assembly.

The Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the Council for Namibia have over the years maintained a close and constructive working relationship in the attainment of our common cause: a free and independent Namibia. Both these United Nations organs created by the Assembly were always united in their tireless and unrelenting quest to bring about a free and united Namibia.

In 1967, the General Assembly established the United Nations Council for Namibia as the legal Administering Authority for Namibia until independence. It entrusted the Council with the role of protecting, representing and promoting the rights and interests of Namibia and its people. Over those long and difficult years, the Council has spared no effort to end South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia in order to enable the people of the Territory to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and genuine independence.

(Mr. Tadesse, Chairman,
Special Committee of 24)

The Council was instrumental in successfully galvanizing world public opinion and making it aware of the true conditions then existing in pre-independent Namibia. By exercising its influence, authority and expertise in a myriad of different fields and forums, and in close co-operation with other organs of the United Nations, regional organizations and the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) as well as with the support of the international community, the Council, after relentless and arduous efforts, was able to fulfil its important mandate. The Special Committee, as the focal point for decolonization in the United Nations, has consistently extended its unqualified support for and full co-operation with the work of the Council for Namibia in advancing the cause of the decolonization of that land.

It is therefore with a deep sense of satisfaction and accomplishment that we congratulate the Council for Namibia today on its overwhelming success in bringing to an end one of the world's most pernicious forms of colonialism.

We salute the people of the free and independent Member State of Namibia. We sympathize with these gallant sons and daughters of Africa for the many years of anguish and devastation they suffered during their struggle for independence. Their fortitude in the face of adversity, their endurance despite the overwhelming vicissitudes that confronted them and, led by their national liberation movement, SWAPO, their unswerving devotion to the cause of an independent Namibia, culminated in that nation's taking its rightful place in this assembly of sovereign and independent States.

Similarly, we salute the Organization of African Unity and its Liberation Committee, as well as the Non-Aligned Movement and its Co-ordinating Bureau at the United Nations, for the all-round assistance rendered to the people of Namibia in their arduous struggle for independence. Special gratitude goes to the front-line

(Mr. Tadesse, Chairman,
Special Committee of 24)

States that made enormous sacrifices for the principled stand they took regarding Namibia. Indeed, we pay a tribute to all those who have contributed to the enhanced role of the Council, and particularly its last President, Ambassador Peter Zuze of Zambia, for his indefatigable efforts in the fulfilment of the Council's mandate.

Since 1962 the Special Committee has devoted itself to the cause of decolonization. That goal was greatly advanced and enhanced by Namibia's accession to independence. As we mark the successful fulfilment of the mandate of the Council for Namibia, we cannot help but recall that there are still 18 Non-Self-Governing Territories on the Special Committee's list that have not yet exercised their right to self-determination and independence. Those Territories, for the most part small island Territories in the Pacific and the Caribbean, now remain the central focus of the Special Committee's efforts in carrying out the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly. I refer in particular to resolution 43/47, adopted by the Assembly in 1988, in which it proclaimed the years 1990 to 2000 the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

With the co-operation and support of the international community, the Special Committee is firmly committed to that vital task. Its fervent intent is that within the current decade the Special Committee shall be in the same position as the United Nations Council for Namibia - that is, able to present to this international assembly States which have fully exercised their right to self-determination and independence, thereby demonstrating the successful completion of the task entrusted to the Special Committee by the Assembly.

The PRESIDENT: We are happy to welcome the Minister of Local Government and Housing of the Republic of Namibia, Her Excellency The Honourable Libertina Amathila. I now invite her to make her statement.

Ms. AMATHILA (Namibia): The Government and the people of the Republic of Namibia have done me the honour of asking me to represent them on this momentous occasion, set aside for the purpose of paying a deserved tribute to the United Nations Council for Namibia, at the conclusion of its historic mission, for a job well done.

I take this opportunity to express, on behalf of our young Republic, our sincere gratitude to the States Members of the United Nations, and particularly to the General Assembly for the courageous decision it took some 24 years ago, by its adoption of resolution 2145 (XXI) in 1966, to defend the just cause and aspirations of the Namibian people to self-determination and national independence. Under the subsequent General Assembly resolution 2248 (S-V), of 1967, the United Nations Council for Namibia was entrusted with the execution of the sacred trust of ensuring the fulfilment of the direct responsibility of the United Nations for Namibia until independence.

As all representatives here know, that task was not a very easy one. The Namibian people had to endure pain and suffering for many years at the hands of apartheid colonialism. We were forced to take up arms in defence of our very existence. Many of our beloved compatriots made supreme sacrifices for the sake of freedom and justice. At no time, however, did our people despair or give up the struggle. We were driven by the burning desire for dignity, justice and peace in our motherland. We drew courage from those who stood with us against all odds.

In that struggle we were joined by the international community, which gave us all-round support and sustenance. The Namibian people will remain for ever indebted to everyone here who stood by us during the darkest hours. We count the Council for Namibia amongst those that were at the forefront of our struggle. Truly the Council was a reliable partner in our quest for national liberation.

(Ms. Amathila, Namibia)

The invaluable contribution made by the Council for Namibia will remain for ever in our minds; it will be a chapter in the history of our country and its people.

I take this opportunity to express, on behalf of my Government and people, our sincere thanks to the successive Presidents of the Council who, through their wisdom and dedication, steered it to its final goal - namely, the achievement of national independence. We are grateful to all the members of the Council for Namibia, who often sacrificed their own national interests while championing our cause. Nothing could be more remarkable than that. They became part of the Namibian family. I want to assure them that an independent Namibia is indeed their home.

(Ms. Amathila, Namibia)

I salute the Special Committee of 24 and its Chairman for their many years of hard work in support of the inalienable right of the people of Namibia to self-determination and national independence. We wish them well in continuing their challenging task and their very winnable struggle to ensure that all peoples regain their freedom and human dignity, in keeping with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV).

We shall not forget the most valuable services rendered our struggle over the years by the United Nations Secretariat. Its members, too, occupy a special place in our hearts.

It is very painful to remember that of those who fought so hard all were not able to be part of the joyous moment when Namibia became an independent and sovereign nation on 21 March 1990. Among the fallen heroes we count not only Namibians but other nationals who made their mark on Namibian history as well. One is immediately reminded of the late Sean McBride, former Commissioner for Namibia and a towering giant whose steadfast dedication, innovation and foresight provided direction to the Council's work for years.

With similar sentiments we remember the late Bernt Carlsson, the last Commissioner for Namibia, who met his tragic death just as the final chapter in the decolonization of Namibia was being concluded. And we shall remember several others who made their selfless contribution to Namibia's independence.

The General Assembly under your stewardship, Mr. President, has made a wise decision to convene this resumed session to pay, in the most appropriate manner, a well-earned homage to the Council for Namibia, not only for its services to Namibia but for having been a shining symbol of dedication to humanity, freedom and justice. We know that to many of its members the dissolution of the Council is like a sad dream. Many of us who have come to work closely with the Council feel

(Ms. Amathila, Namibia)

the same, but all of us are united and strengthened by the fact that this very act today will again confirm to the entire world that the international community, in a rather unique way, has fulfilled its sacred trust: that of returning Namibia to its people.

Although the Council, having faithfully and successfully fulfilled its historic mandate, is being dissolved, the Government of the Republic of Namibia is strongly appealing to the international community, and especially to the General Assembly, to see to it that the ongoing programmes and projects under which young Namibians are undergoing training and fellowship should not be sacrificed.

In this way the special responsibility that the United Nations had assumed over our country and that helped, in more ways than one, to ensure Nambia's eventual decolonization can be brought to a dignified and worthy conclusion. This is the collective view of the Cabinet of the Republic of Namibia.

To that end the Secretary-General of the United Nations should be given the means and empowered by the General Assembly, with adequate funds and technical resources, to oversee the completion of those outstanding commitments made by the Council, including, in particular, the relocation of the United Nations Institute for Namibia and the satisfactory conclusion of its ongoing activities.

Naturally, we shall count on our friends, former members of the Council and all of you, to join us during the second phase of our struggle, that of national reconstruction and development, which is as challenging and demanding as was the struggle for independence. A combination of hard work by Namibians and international support assure our country of confidence in the future.

I should like to place on record once again our heartfelt appreciation to the Secretary-General for the special care and commitment with which he nobly executed the mandate entrusted to him by the General Assembly and the Security Council,

(Ms. Amathila, Namibia)

particularly in the successful implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

I should also like to take a moment to state how proud we feel to have enjoyed the tremendous support of the front-line States, the Organization of African Unity, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and countless other friends and supporters of our people. An independent Namibia stands ready, in whatever humble way, to make its contributions towards international peace and security, freedom and justice for all.

Before concluding, allow me to state here that our small children in some of the schools in Namibia have been asking whether the people of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) who went home have arrived safely in their countries. I have been given the task of finding out from Mr. Ahtisaari whether the members of UNTAG have indeed arrived home, because apparently he has not yet written to the children to say that everybody had done so. I am glad to be able to take back the message that all the members of the UNTAG have safely rejoined their families.

The PRESIDENT: Replying on behalf of Mr. Ahtisaari, I can tell Dr. Amathila that all the dedicated members of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) - at least those here in the Secretariat - have all arrived back safely.

The Assembly will now consider the two draft resolutions recommended by the United Nations Council for Namibia. They are contained in Chapter I of Part V of the report of the Council (A/44/24/Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1/Rev.1).

Before proceeding to the vote on these draft resolutions, I should like to draw the Assembly' attention to the provisions of special rule F in annex III to

(The President)

the rules of procedure, which have been applied in the past in the voting on all proposals under the agenda item "Question of Namibia". In accordance with the provisions of special rule F, a two-thirds majority of the representatives present and voting is required for adoption of proposals on the item before the Assembly.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolutions A and B contained in Chapter I of Part V of the report of the Council for Namibia (A/44/24/Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1/Rev.1).

The report of the Fifth Committee on the programme budget implications of the draft resolutons has been issued as document A/44/975.

The General Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A, "Dissolution of the United Nations Council for Namibia". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution A?

Draft resolution A was adopted (resolution 44/243 A).

The PRESIDENT: We now come to draft resolution B, "United Nations Fund for Namibia". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution B?

Draft resolution B was adopted (resolution 44/243 B).

The PRESIDENT: In the light of the resolutions just adopted, the agenda item on the question of Namibia is thereby deleted from the provisional agenda of the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

Before calling upon the first speaker wishing to make a statement in explanation of vote after the voting, may I remind delegations that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. TRAXLER (Italy): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 12 member States of the European Community. The European Community and its member States have rejoiced that Namibia has at last taken its place in the United Nations as a free, sovereign and independent State. We wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute once more to the central role played by the United Nations in assisting the peaceful transition of Namibia to independence. We also wish to acknowledge the work done by the United Nations Council for Namibia.

The Twelve are pleased to have been able to join in the consensus on the two draft resolutions just adopted by the Assembly. The Twelve take it that all measures and programmes aimed at implementing the resolutions just adopted will be carried out in consultation with and with the agreement of the Government of Namibia. We wish to recall on this occasion that the position of our member States on the legal authority of the United Nations Council for Namibia is well known and has not changed.

As to the administrative and budgetary aspects, the Twelve have been willing to proceed on the basis of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, and they refer in this context to the position expressed in the Fifth Committee. However, they wish to recall that implementation of these resolutions, like all others, must be subject to the financial and staff regulations of the United Nations and, of course, to the United Nations Charter.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Nigeria, who wishes to speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

Mr. GAMBARI (Nigeria): I am grateful for this opportunity to speak on behalf of the Group of African States at the United Nations. Today will surely go down in history as yet another milestone in the annals of the United Nations; it is a milestone of which we Africans are particularly proud. Slightly more than 23 years ago, on 19 May 1967, the international community gave concrete expression to

(Mr. Gambari, Nigeria)

its collective resolve on the question of Namibia by establishing the United Nations Council for Namibia. The establishment of the Council with a clear mandate to be the legal Administering Authority for the Territory until the latter's independence followed the termination of South Africa's mandate over Namibia the previous year. The extent to which the Council prosecuted that trust and the mandate of the international community is self-evident. Namibia is now a sovereign and independent nation and a full member and active player in the community of nations.

Throughout its 23 years of existence the United Nations Council for Namibia did not waver from its course. It waged war against the illegal occupation of Namibia and the mindless exploitation and despoliation of its resources with single-minded dedication and zeal. It is a testimony to the efficacy of the leadership role the Council played in the fight to free Namibia that today some of its activities and actions in pursuit of that goal have opened new frontiers in the progressive development of international law.

Africa is very grateful indeed to the United Nations Council for Namibia. We are very proud of its achievements. We are inspired by its legacy in one of the most epic struggles that Africa in particular and the international community as a whole has had to wage in the history of mankind. Africa is particularly pround of the fact that for many years Zambia, a front-line African State, provided some of our best and brightest sons to lead the United Nations Council for Namibia. We salute the Republic of Zambia for that solid contribution to international solidarity. We particularly congratulate and commend the outgoing President of the United Nations Council for Namibia, His Excellency retired Lt.-Gen. Peter D. Zuze, whose dedication, quiet resolve and great determination in keeping the Namibian issue on the front burner has been unsurpassed. Mr. Ambassador, great son of Africa, we warmly and heartily congratulate you for fighting the good fight even in the face of seemingly implacable odds.

(Mr. Gambari, Nigeria)

As we are to dissolve the Council, it is the hope of Africa that the proper hand-over of all its assets to the Government of independent Namibia will be effected. We also trust that the Secretary-General of our great Organization will apply the necessary rules and regulations to ensure the smooth redeployment of the staff of the Council to other sections within the Secretariat where their experience can be effectively utilized. We commend the staff of the Council and the Office of the Commissioner for Namibia for a job very well done.

Africa sincerely wishes to convey its gratitude to all the States members of the Council for Namibia, who worked so tirelessly and selflessly to realize our collective aspiration to free Namibia from the shackles of colonialism and apartheid. We hope the Council's dissolution will not mean an abandonment of some of its programmes and activities yet to be fully implemented, in particular the training programmes. Ways must be found to complete those programmes properly in order to sustain the credibility of our Organization.

Therefore, on behalf of the African Group and my own country Nigeria, which was a pioneer member of the Council, I wish to congratulate us all on the adoption of the resolutions formally dissolving the United Nations Council for Namibia.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Belize, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States .

Mr. ROGERS (Belize): The Latin American and Caribbean States would like to endorse all the sentiments expressed by previous speakers.

Indeed this is a moment of celebration, for Namibia is truly a child of the United Nations. A free, sovereign and united Namibia is the result of the work of all of us: the work of the Council for Namibia, the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the Non-Aligned Movement and the front-line States. And it would be remiss of me not to mention the contribution of

(Mr. Rogers, Belize)

the Caribbean: the illustrious daughter of Barbados, Her Excellency Dame Nita Barrow, now Governor General of Barbados. They all played a great part in bringing Namibia to independence.

We all celebrate the adoption of these resolutions today and salute all those who have contributed in any way.

The PRESIDENT: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote. It is now my pleasant duty to call on the Secretary-General to make a statement.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I should like to place on record my appreciation of the role played by the United Nations Council for Namibia over the past 23 years in fulfilment of the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly. With its dissolution, the intimate association of the United Nations with Namibia's quest for independence has concluded. This does not mean that our commitment to Namibia has diminished. The United Nations has already begun to orient its activities and co-operation to the task of helping the Namibian people to consolidate their newly won freedom through social and economic development.

It is perhaps pertinent to recall the unique relationship that developed between the United Nations and the people of Namibia following the General Assembly decision in 1967 to assume responsibility for "the moral and material well-being and security" of the people of Namibia.

(The Secretary-General)

The Council for Namibia was created specifically to fulfil this mandate.

At the request of the General Assembly, the Council embarked on a campaign to mobilize international support for the independence of Namibia and to safeguard as well as promote the national interests of the Namibian people. It proved itself a staunch and reliable advocate of Namibia at international and intergovernmental forums and ensured that its national interests were internationally recognized and respected. It exercised legislative authority on behalf of the Namibian people, notably in the context of the Decree for the protection of their national resources. It launched an active and international public information campaign.

In its capacity as Trustee of the United Nations Fund for Namibia, the Council administered a range of activities and programmes designed to assist individual Namibians and to contribute to the emergence of an independent society whose people would be equipped with the necessary skills. It was instrumental in the creation of relevant institutions, including the United Nations Institute for Namibia, the Vocational Training Centre and the Technical Secondary School. The Nationhood Programme, in particular, drew upon the talents of the Namibian people and gave them an opportunity for development.

As President Nujoma of Namibia stated, the Council was a true partner in the process of the decolonization of Namibia, and its programmes and institutions played a vital role in providing the necessary skills to Namibians essential for the administration of an independent Namibia.

I have frequently had reason to meet with the Council in the context of the specific responsibilities relating to Namibia which were assigned to me by the General Assembly and the Security Council. I have valued my association with its President, Ambassador Zuze, whose country, Zambia, has been among the most notable sources of support to the United Nations efforts for Namibia. I should like to

(The Secretary-General)

place on record my deep sense of appreciation to all the members of the Council for their untiring efforts and for the commitment and spirit of endeavour that infused their work.

I pay a tribute also to the generation of international civil servants who worked with almost passionate dedication in Namibia's cause. Two of the most honoured names - Sean McBride and Bernt Carlsson - are now a memory to which we pay hommage.

Mention must also be made of the sterling services provided by other members of the staff and secretariat of the Council and the Office of the Commissioner for Namibia. Together they performed a job well done.

The question of Namibia has demonstrated that when a just cause is at stake and has the sustained support of the international community, it will ultimately triumph.

The PRESIDENT: We have thus concluded our consideration of agenda item 36.

AGENDA ITEM 17 (continued)

APPOINTMENTS TO FILL VACANCIES IN SUBSIDIARY ORGANS AND OTHER APPOINTMENTS

(j) APPOINTMENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSIONER FOR NAMIBIA

The PRESIDENT: It will be recalled that the General Assembly decided on 22 September 1989 to include sub-item (j) of agenda item 17 on the agenda of its forty-fourth session.

As there is no further basis for action on this sub-item, may I take it that members agree that it should not be included in the draft agenda of the forty-fifth session?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: That concludes our consideration of sub-item (j) of agenda item 17.

AGENDA ITEM 18 (continued)

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (A/44/974)

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly has before it a letter (A/44/974) addressed to me by the Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

Our attention is drawn to the nomenclature of item 115 of the provisional agenda of the forty-fifth session. In the light of Namibia's independence, that nomenclature should be modified by deleting from the title the words "Namibia and in all other".

May I take it that the Assembly agrees that item 115 of the provisional agenda of the forty-fifth session should read "Activities of foreign economic and other interests which are impeding the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in Territories under colonial domination and efforts to eliminate colonialism, aartheid and racial discrimination in southern Africa"?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: In the light of the decision just made, may I take it that the Assembly considers that the discussion of this item at the present session is concluded?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: This therefore concludes our consideration of agenda item 18.

TENTATIVE PROGRAMME OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform members that the General Assembly will consider agenda item 114, "Enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections", as the first item tomorrow morning, before it considers item 28, "Policies of apartheid of the Government of South Africa".

It is envisaged that the Assembly will take action on draft resolution A/44/L.67, entitled "Assistance to Haiti", under item 114, on Friday, 14 September, in the afternoon.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.